TRAVELER'S BRIEFING

POLAND

(Rzeczpospolita Polska)

Vejle
SWEDEN
Karlskrona
Šiauliai
Pakruojis
LATVIA
DENMARK
Odense
Ystad
Simris
Baltic Sea
Klaipėda
Šilalė
Panevėžys
Nykøbing
Rønne
Šilutė
Kaunas
Širvintos
Vilnius
Kiel
Stralsund
Słupsk
Lębork
RUSSIA
LITHUANIA
Minsk
Elbląg
Druskininkai
Hamburg
Gdańsk
Koszalin
Hrodna
Waren
Pisz
BELARUS
Lüneburg
Szczecin
Olsztyn
Slonim
Baranavičy
GERMANY
Bydgoszcz
Toruń
Schwedt
Hannover
Salihorsk
Płock
Poznań
Berlin
Warsaw
Kobryn
Pinsk
Salzgitter
POLAND
Leszno
Brèst
Halle
Sieradz
Ryki
Cottbus
Łódź
Kovel'
Erfurt
Dresden
Wrocław
Radom
Lublin
Rivne
Gera
Chemnitz
Opole
Kielce
Luts'k
Hradec Králové
Gliwice
Biłgoraj
UKRAINE
Hof
Prague
Mielec
Bamberg
Kraków
Ternopil'
Plzeň
CZECH REPUBLIC
Sanok
L'viv
Amberg
Ostrava
Zakopane
Ingolstadt
Kalush
Zlín
Žilina
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BACKGROUND

Full Name: Republic of Poland

Capital: Warsaw

Population: 38,608,929 (est)

Type of government: Democratic State

Head of government: PM Jerzy Buzek

Official language(s) Polish

Economy: Transition Capitalist

Religions: Roman Catholic (95%)

TRAVEL

Travel restrictions: None

International Airport: Warsaw

Flights from Frankfurt: LOT Polish Airlines

Other methods of arrival: Ship/road/rail

U.S. Embassy address: Aleje Ujazdowskie 29/31, Warsaw. Tel: 48-22-625-7602; FAX: 48-22-625-2760 E-mail

Transportation: Public transportation: Fair.

Urban Roads/Maintenance: Good.

Rural roads/Maintenance: Fair.

Availability of roadside assistance: Poor.

ENTRY/EXIT

Travel Necessities: Military personnel on leave require passport, ID card, and leave orders. A visa is not required for a regular (tourist) passport if stay is less than 90 days. Civilian personnel (including dependents) require passports. A visa is not required for stays of 90 days or less. A visa is required if staying more than 90 days. Visitors must register at a hotel or with local authorities within 48 hours of arrival. Active duty military personnel on official orders to Poland require an ID card and NATO travel orders. Civilian personnel require passports. For official travel a no-fee passport is required. Starting in early 1999, a recent change in the law requires every traveler to be able to show a means of support. Customs, immigration, and quarantine inspection is required. Americans should ensure that their passports are date-stamped upon entry.

Duty-free entry for used personal effects: (includes portable typewriter), 200 cigarettes or 20 cigars or one pound of tobacco. Recommend importing only the minimum amount needed.

HELPFUL HINTS

Special restrictions: Poland is a moderately developed European nation and a new democracy rapidly implementing a free market transformation. While improving rapidly, tourist facilities are not highly developed in all areas, and some of the services taken for granted in other European countries can be difficult to find in some parts of the country. Polish law prohibits Polish citizens from serving in the armed forces of a foreign state and violators are subject to arrest and prosecution. US-Polish dual citizens who are members of the US armed forces may be liable to these penalties if they do not use their US passports to enter and depart Poland. Polish customs authorities may enforce strict regulations concerning temporary import and export of items such as works of art, particularly those created before 1945. Works of art produced by living artists after 1945 may be exported with permission from the Provincial Conservator of Relics. Some works of art

Amembassy operating hours are 0830-1700L Mon-Fri.

exportation if the artist is no longer living and the work is considered of high cultural value.

MONEY

Currency restrictions: Upon entry into Poland, visitors must request a form to declare currency, travelers checks, and other cash instruments in amounts in excess of 2,000 ECU (approximately $2,000 US). The declaration form should be stamped by Polish customs and retained by the traveler for presentation on departure. Undeclared cash may be confiscated upon departure and visitors carrying undeclared cash may be subject to criminal penalties. Export restrictions apply to works of art, particularly those created before 1945. Throughout Poland, particularly outside Warsaw, it is difficult to cash travelers checks or obtain cash advances on credit cards. Local currency may be exchanged at State banking facility or travel agency (ORBIS) office and also any local KANTOR office.

HEALTH

Major threats: diarrhea, respiratory diseases, accidents, arthropod-borne diseases, STDs, cold injuries, and industrial pollution.
Availability of medical services: Good.

Medical Insurance: May not apply in Poland.

Status of hospitals: Fair. Adequate medical care is available in generally does not meet Western standards. Doctors and hospit immediate cash payment for services.

Health Precautions: An AIDS test is required for student visas; US test results are accepted.

Immunizations: Hep A (recommended), Hep B (recommended), TB (recommended) MMR (recommended) and tetanus-disptheria boosters (recommended).

FORCE PROTECTION

Country Clearance: Required for all military personnel traveling to Poland. You obtain this by going through your S3/G3 section. This must be done at least 30 days ahead of scheduled visit. DV visits will also be coordinated through G3/S3 channels.

Briefings: AT/FP level I brief from command's Level II trainer or equivalent.

Drink bottled water. Driving, especially after dark, is very hazardous. Roads are generally narrow, badly lit, and in poor repair. Roads are often used by pedestrians and animals as well as by vehicles. Heavy alcohol consumption is frequently a contributing factor in accidents.

CRIME

Criminal Activities: All crowded public areas are subject to petty crime such as pickpocketing and theft. Reported incidents of crime are increasing in all major cities throughout the country. Crime rates in Poland vary. While overall crime rates are considerably lower than those for many American cities, particular problem areas exist, and tourists have been targeted in some locales in major cities. The tri-cities area of Gdynia, Sopot, and Gdansk has seen an increase in muggings. Organized groups of thieves and pickpockets operate in train stations, at major tourist destinations, and on trains, trams, and buses in major cities. Car thefts, carjackings, and theft from cars do occur. Drivers should be wary of persons indicating they should pull over or that something is wrong with their car. Often, a second car or person is following, and when the driver of the targeted car gets out to see if there is a problem, the person who has been

Poland is strict on: DWI. Polish laws provide virtually zero tolerance for driving under the influence of alcohol.

WEATHER

CLOTHING

Uniform restrictions: There is currently no restriction on wearing of uniforms.

This concludes the TRAVELER'S BRIEFING for

POLAND